

Remarks

Claims 1–32 are pending in the application. Claims 1–32 are rejected. Amendments to the application are shown above. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1–3, 6–7, 10–15, 17–21, 23–25, 27–28, and 30–32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ortega (U.S. 6,564,213) and Gross (U.S. 2004/0143564). Claims 4 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ortega (U.S. 6,564,213) and Gross (U.S. 2004/0143564) in view of Bowman (U.S. 6,006,225). Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ortega (U.S. 6,564,213) and Gross (U.S. 2004/0143564) in view of Nye (U.S. 2002/0156917). Claims 5, 22, 26, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ortega (U.S. 6,564,213) and Gross (U.S. 2004/0143564) in view of Chan (U.S. 2006/0129915).

Claims 1–12

Claim 1 as presently amended expressly recites (emphasis added):

A method of incrementally refining queries and updating query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission, comprising:

- a) defining one or more query related character patterns that do not include an explicit indicator of query submission;
- b) monitoring entry of query defining characters by a user to detect entry of a defined query related character pattern;
- c) providing the user with one or more suggested query refinement options each time a defined query related character pattern is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission;

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d) providing the user with an updated query result each time a defined query related character pattern is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission; and

e) changing the defined query related character patterns in response to a change in a connection speed at a client-server connection used to provide the user with updated query results, wherein the query related character patterns are defined to occur more frequently as the connection speed increases.

Claim 1 has been amended to include similar subject matter previously recited in cancelled claims 8-9. On page 14 of the instant Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges that Ortega and Gross do not explicitly teach the claim limitations in now cancelled claims 8-9. The Examiner cites Nye, paragraph [0010], as disclosing these claim limitations. The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Nye is directed to an attribute bounded network of computers. In paragraph [0010], Nye summarizes the Napster peer-to-peer file sharing system. The Napster central server collects information about files stored on clients. This information includes client connection speed information. A user may search the central server to find a desired file. When a file is selected by the user, file location information (including connection speed of the client where the file is stored) is provided to the user's client. The user's client may then make a direct connection to the client having the desired file for downloading the file.

However, Nye fails to disclose how the client connection speed information is used. The Examiner assumes (on page 15 of the Office Action) that the connection speed information is used by Nye to efficiently search and transfer files. However, Nye does not disclose or suggest that the connection speed information is used for searching of files. Nor does Nye disclose or suggest that the connection speed information is used to regulate search queries. Thus, Nye fails to disclose or suggest

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“changing the defined query related character patterns in response to a change in a connection speed at a client-server connection used to provide the user with updated query results, wherein the query related character patterns are defined to occur more frequently as the connection speed increases” as expressly claimed by the Applicant.

Thus, Ortega, Gross, and Nye, whether taken singularly or in combination, fail to disclose at least one of the expressly recited limitations of claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is not rendered obvious by the cited references. Claims 2-7 and 10-12 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1 in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the instant § 103 rejections to claims 1-12 be withdrawn.

Claims 13-20

Claim 13 as presently amended expressly recites (emphasis added):

A method of incrementally refining queries and updating query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission, comprising:

- a) providing a user with one or more query refinement options as the user enters query defining characters;
- b) detecting entry of a query defining word by the user without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission; and
- c) providing the user with an updated query result each time entry of a query defining word is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission, wherein the query defining word includes a string of characters followed by a predefined time delay before additional characters are entered by the user.

Claim 13 has been amended to include similar subject matter as previously recited in cancelled claim 18. On page 8 of the instant Office Action, the Examiner cites Ortega (col. 2, lines 20-25) as disclosing now cancelled claim 18. The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Ortega is directed to search query autocompletion. Ortega discloses that a dataset is periodically generated that contains autocompletion strings (col. 2, lines 5–10). The datasets are generated so as to favor the items and/or search strings that are currently the most popular (col. 2, lines 20–23). The datasets may be generated by extracting search terms and phrases that appear most frequently in successful searches within a selected period of time (col. 2, lines 27–30). However, this aspect of Ortega is not related to detection of strings entered by a user as expressly claimed by the Applicant.

Ortega discloses using a trie data structure for storing and lookup of autocompletion strings (col. 5, lines 66–67). Ortega discloses that each time a user enters a character of the search query, the autocompletion client moves down the trie by one level to a node that matches the entered characters (col. 5, lines 10–14). Ortega then searches the nodes below that node for nodes having terms and phrases with the highest scores (col. 5, lines 14–15). These located terms and phrases are then displayed to the user (col. 5, lines 17–18). However, Ortega fails to disclose “*providing the user with an updated query result each time entry of a query defining word is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission, wherein the query defining word includes a string of characters followed by a predefined time delay before additional characters are entered by the user*” as expressly claimed by the Applicant.

Thus, Ortega and Gross, whether taken singularly or in combination, fail to disclose at least one of the expressly recited limitations of claim 13. Accordingly, claim 13 is not rendered obvious by the cited references. Claims 14–17 and 19–20 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as independent claim 13

in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the instant § 103 rejections to claims 13–20 be withdrawn.

Claims 21–24

Claim 21 as presently amended expressly recites (emphasis added):

A method of incrementally refining queries and updating query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission, comprising:

- a) providing a user with auto-complete alternatives as the user enters query defining characters;
- b) detecting entry of a completed query defining word by the user;
- c) providing the user with a query result list each time a query defining word is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission;
- d) providing the user with query refinement options related to the query defining word without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission;
- e) determining whether the user selects a provided query refinement option;
- f) providing the user with an updated query result list when it is determined that the user has selected a provided query refinement option; and
- g) providing a visual indicator to the user each time the updated query result list is provided to the user.

Claim 21 has been amended to include similar subject matter previously recited in cancelled claim 22. On page 16 of the instant Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges that Ortega and Gross do not explicitly teach the claim limitations of now cancelled claim 22. The Examiner cites Chan, paragraphs [0054] and [0114], as disclosing now cancelled claim 22. The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Chan is directed to blinking annotation callouts highlighting cross language search terms. Chan discloses highlighting the matching phrases or matching objects found in a returned search list (Fig. 15; [0114]). The highlighting is a visual cue, such as

a bubble or a callout ([0114]). The visual cue in Chan is highlighting matching terms and phrases in the search results, but does not indicate that the search results themselves have been updated. Thus, Chan fails to disclose “*providing a visual indicator to the user each time the updated query result list is provided to the user*” as expressly claimed by the Applicant.

Further, Chan teaches away from the claimed invention. In paragraph [0114], lines 10–11, the user clicks “go” in the GUI to start the search process. In contrast to Chan, Applicant’s claim 21 expressly recites “*providing the user with a query result list each time a query defining word is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission.*” Thus, Chan leads one skilled in the art away from the claimed invention because Chan discloses that the user explicitly indicates when a search is to be started.

Thus, Ortega, Gross, and Chan, whether taken singularly or in combination, fail to disclose at least one of the expressly recited limitations of claim 21. Accordingly, claim 21 is not rendered obvious by the cited references. Claims 23–24 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as independent claim 21 in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the instant § 103 rejections to claims 21– 24 be withdrawn.

Claims 25–29

Claim 25 as presently amended expressly recites “*a visual indicator that indicates when the query result list is updated.*” The Applicant submits that claim 25 distinguishes from the cited references for at least the same reasons as claim 21. Claims 27–29 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as independent claim 25 in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore,

the Applicant respectfully requests that the instant § 103 rejections to claims 25–29 be withdrawn.

Claims 30–32

Claim 30 as presently amended expressly recites “*changing the defined query related character patterns in response to a change in a connection speed at the network connection, wherein the query related character patterns are defined to occur more frequently as the connection speed increases.*” The Applicant submits that claim 30 distinguishes from the cited references for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Claims 31–32 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as independent claim 30 in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the instant § 103 rejections to claims 30–32 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the above amendment and remarks it is submitted that the claims are patentably distinct over the prior art and that all the rejections to the claims have been overcome. Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that the pending claims be allowed, and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicant’s attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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PATENT

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee that is not covered by an enclosed payment, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-0463.

Respectfully submitted,

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February 26, 2007
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